

The Honorable James Marleau
Chair, Senate Committee on Health Policy
Michigan Senate
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, Michigan 48909

May 5th, 2014
Re: Senate Bill 879

Dear Sirs:

Thank you for your time reading this letter. As a lifelong Michigan resident, and as a physician that has done all of my education and training in the state of Michigan, I pay particular interest to issues affecting our state regarding healthcare. Furthermore, as a fellowship-trained Breast Radiologist, women's health and mammography in particular are of utmost importance to me both personally and professionally.

Breast density is very important for the radiologist to take into consideration when interpreting a mammogram. Mammograms are less sensitive in women with denser breasts (demonstrated widely in the scientific literature), and therefore these mammograms must be examined very closely and carefully. However, at many institutions in our state, that is where the transfer of knowledge stops. Breast density is often not recorded in the mammogram reports, and if it is, it is sometimes hard to find. Thus, referring physicians are often not aware of their patients that have dense breasts, and consequently, many patients are not aware themselves. This is really a disservice to our women. That simple transfer of knowledge (from radiologist to referring physician and patient) could ultimately save lives. If a woman knows she has dense breasts, her and her physician can discuss an appropriate screening plan, which could consist of clinical exams, mammography and other imaging modalities (such as breast ultrasound or MRI). Knowledge IS power.

In closing, I urge you to take a step in the right direction in women's healthcare. Given the large number of women affected by breast cancer each year, this small change can have a huge impact. We have personally had great success identifying, reporting and following women with dense breasts, and presenting them and their referring physicians with screening plans/options.

Thank you for your time. I am happy to personally address any questions or concerns you may have regarding this manner.

Warmly,

Kristin Krizmanich-Conniff, M.D.
(Electronic Signature)

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